

31st Fighter Wing: The U.S. Air Force's fighter wing south of the Alps

THE VIGILEER

Vol. 52 No. 4

Feb. 3, 2006

Aviano Air Base, Italy

Fly Bys

Super Bowl

The La Bella Vista Club is hosting a free Super Bowl party at 9 p.m. Sunday. More than \$1,000 in cash and prizes will be given away to club members and free food is provided. For more information, call Ext. 4303.

Health care

The Aviano Area One clinic has acute appointments available from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. The Sacile hospital does not have after hours care or an emergency room. People who have an emergency should go to the closest emergency room. For those who live in the Aviano area, Pordenone is the closest emergency room. To schedule an appointment at the Area One clinic, call 0434-30-5000. For medical advice at any hour, call the Nurse Advice line at 800-877-660.

IG vacancy

The 31st Fighter Wing Inspector General's office is seeking a senior non-commissioned officer to fill the superintendent vacancy. Application packages are due to the 31st FW/IG by March 3. For more information, call Ext. 5662.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Holzworth

Warm welcome

Master Sgt. Jonathan Dore, 603rd Air Control Squadron, is greeted by his wife and children after returning from Afghanistan. Deployed 603rd ACS members returned to Aviano Sunday and Tuesday after a deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Wing prepares for tax season

By Tech Sgt. Jerome Baysmore
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Tax season is here and base personnel are more than ready to assist Aviano Airmen with their tax needs.

The 31st Fighter Wing Legal Office has trained unit tax advisors to help Aviano

members "E-file" or mail in their state taxes starting Monday.

"We offer comprehensive federal personal income tax preparation services," said Mr. Jim Ketchum, 31st FW tax advisor. "We handle all of the most common

See Taxes, Page 8

Rock concert: The band "Adam's Attic" is playing a free welcome home concert at 8 p.m. Saturday in the community center.

31st FW Sortie Board

sortie: n, a flight of a combat aircraft on a mission

	Hours	Sorties
31st FW goal	905.8	632
	-4.1	+1

Information current as of Wednesday.



Food pantry

Aviano members helped fellow military families down on their luck by donating to the new food pantry.

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Local Nationals

Working side-by-side with Americans, Aviano's local nationals keep Aviano flying and fighting.

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31st Fighter Wing

Commander's Corner

By Brig. Gen. Robert Yates
31st Fighter Wing commander

World's Finest Warriors –

We have a lot to talk about this week!

I had the honor of being part of a wonderful ceremony Saturday. It all started when members of the Italian Army's Ariete Brigade landed at Aviano on Jan. 27. We were privileged to be a part of the welcoming party at Hangar One when these troops started arriving home after being in Iraq for five months. More than 60 Italian Army Soldiers were received at Hangar One in a very fitting tribute to the outstanding work they accomplished during their deployment.

The following day, our group commanders and several squadron commanders joined me in Pordenone for a ceremony honoring more than 1,800 Ariete Brigade Soldiers who were deployed. It was a truly amazing experience and I am blessed to have been a part of it.

Here at Aviano, we've been busy welcoming home our troops who deployed as part of AEF 7/8. We still have more Airmen returning in small groups and I look forward to welcoming them back as they continue returning to Aviano.

While our AEF 7/8 deployers have been leading the fight on the global war on terrorism, we've been busy right here at the World's Finest ranch taking care of our own. Today marks the opening of our food pantry at the base chapel.

Two days ago, Barb and a huge number of selfless volunteers collected canned food, diapers, baby food and non-perishable items to stock the food pantry – no official numbers on how many items were donated but Barb said they collected “tons and tons!” Folks, this is a great program – we know times can get tough and we know it can be hard to ask for help. This is a completely anonymous

program – no referrals needed, no questions asked. If you find yourself in need of food, go to the chapel and pick up one of the boxes that are prepackaged to supply complete meals. Our volunteers are also stocking “baby boxes” – enough diapers, formula and other baby-related items to keep your baby dry, fed and happy.

And remember, if you have food or non-perishable items you want to donate, you can go to the chapel any time to drop off those items. Barb and the chapel team are standing by to accept all your donations, including money and commissary gift certificates.

This month also marks African-American Heritage Month. The theme is “A Tribute to Black Fraternal, Social and Civic Organizations,” and we have plenty of activities lined up for you. Today at 3 p.m. at the La Bella Vista Club, I will proudly sign the declaration marking the official kickoff.

We will also host retired Lt. Col. Lee Archer, one of the original Tuskegee Airmen, who will be the guest speaker at the African-American Heritage Month breakfast at 8 a.m., Feb. 17 at the La Bella Vista Club. Several other events are scheduled throughout the month. For more information on any of these events, turn to page 8 or contact Master Sgt. Virginia Wimmer at Ext. 5519.

I encourage each of you to join Barb and me as we participate, celebrate and learn about African-American heritage.

Finally, without further ado, I want you all to be aware that Monday's duty day will begin at noon. This should give you time to enjoy the Super Bowl! Enjoy your weekend, may the best team win on Sunday and I'll see you at the ranch promptly at noon on Monday!



Aviano Airman of the Week

Name: Senior Airman William Fort
Unit: 31st Civil Engineer Squadron
Hometown: Cape Coral, Fla.
Family: Wife, Renee
Hobbies: Riding motorcycles and outdoor activities
Why joined: To finish his second bachelor's degree and to travel



Health care help just a click away

By Senior Airman Sarah Gregory
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

In an effort to increase health access and convenience, Aviano members can now use Tricare Online to make medical appointments.

Tricare Online is a Department of Defense Internet portal at www.tricareonline.com. It is designed to meet beneficiary needs by providing a gateway to interactive health care services and information.

"Aviano members can use Tricare online to schedule appointments, keep a personal health journal and to gather information on medical and pharmaceutical care," said Capt. Beverly Clark, 31st Medical Operations Squadron.

The goal of the new site is to make scheduling appointments more convenient.

"By becoming a registered user, members can schedule routine and follow-up primary care appointments quickly and easily," said Captain Clark. "Users can access appointments 24 hours a day from home or work computers."

To become a registered user, take the following steps:

- Go to www.TRICAREOnline.com
- Read the Online Privacy and Security Policy and click on "I agree"
- Click on "site registration"
- Click on "patient registration"
- Read the disclaimer and click on "I agree"
- Follow onscreen directions to complete registration

Although using the site is easy, Captain Clark said there are a few things to keep in mind when making appointments.

"It's important to note that each beneficiary must have their own user name and password and users must enter a reason for the visit," she said.

For members enrolled in family practice, the visit reason is always "New Problems/Urgent" because the family practice clinic tries to schedule all patients for the same day. Patients enrolled in pediatrics, flight medicine or internal medicine should select the visit reason most applicable to their needs and can schedule same day or future appointments.

"The 31st Medical Group is committed to improving Aviano's access to health care and with Tricare Online, we offer you another choice of how patients may schedule medical appointments," said Captain Clark.

Patients may always call the appointment line at Ext. 5000 between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. to make appointments.

The rundown:

Aviano members can now log on to a new health benefits Web site. Visit www.tricareonline.com to register for online appointment access, health journals and more.



Photo by 1st Lt. Nicole Dubnicay

Benvenuti home

Members of the Italian Army's 132nd Ariete Armor Brigade are greeted by family and friends at Hangar Three Jan. 27. The 132nd Ariete Brigade returned from a five-month deployment in Nasiriyah, Iraq.

DoD encourages overseas voters to register for 2006 elections

In 2006, U.S. citizens will elect 34 senators, the entire House of Representatives, 37 state governors and hundreds of state and local officials.

Overseas voters and military personnel have a variety of ways to participate in the 2006 elections, starting with the primaries beginning in March through the general election Nov. 7.

U.S. citizens can register to vote and request an absentee ballot using the Federal Post Card Application, which has been redesigned for 2006. It allows voters to provide more information to their local election official as well as provides greater security for their personal information.

The form is available from unit or installation voting assistance officers, U.S. embassies, consular offices and many local civic and overseas groups. It's also available electronically on the Federal Voting Assistance Program Web site at www.fvap.gov.

Once completed, U.S. citizens

can send the FPCA to their local election official in the jurisdiction of their legal voting residence. The local election official will be responsible for sending an absentee ballot to the requestor. All U.S. citizens are encouraged to register as soon as possible to ensure compliance with varying state deadlines.

The FVAP Web site contains useful information, including an updated, electronic copy of the "2006-07 Voting Assistance Guide."

If voters need additional assistance, they should visit their unit or installation voting assistance officer or the nearest U.S. embassy or consular office. Voters may also contact the FVAP staff by e-mail at vote@fvap.ncr.gov or by telephone on one of the many toll-free international phone numbers available on the Web site. FVAP office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday. (Courtesy of Air Force Personnel Service)

Food pantry helps families in need

**By Master Sgt.
Carole Steele**
31st Fighter Wing
Public Affairs

Living in Italy is a slice of heaven for many military families at Aviano. But when times get tough, being far from your extended-family support system can make you feel pretty isolated out on that limb.

That's when your Aviano family and the new Food Pantry can be real lifesavers.

The new base program kicked off Wednesday with a food drive at the Chapel and donations will be boxed and available for anyone who needs a helping hand.

Food Pantry creator Barb Yates modeled the program from one at a base where she and her husband, Brig. Gen. Robert Yates, 31st Fighter Wing commander, were previously stationed.

"It was very successful there because there are always times when people need a little extra help," she said. "Being a spouse, I know what it's like to be left behind [during deployments and TDYs] and have to fend for yourself."

Of course everyone has heard and many have experienced Murphy's Law at that point. "That's when the car breaks down, the washing machine breaks,

power goes out in the house, and you still have babies looking at you that need to eat," said Mrs. Yates. "The Food Pantry is an easy way for a spouse to get food to feed the babies and not have to go in to the active duty member's work place so that everybody knows their business."

The program is steeped in privacy. Those utilizing the new service will never be asked for a group or squadron affiliation, where their spouse works, or any personal information.

"It's completely anonymous. People can retain their dignity," said Mrs. Yates. "It's hard enough to ask for help, much less to go ask for help from someone you might see at the Christmas party, or who does your spouse's EPR or OPR. Nine times out of ten a spouse won't do that."

But now Aviano has a place to turn to that is open to active-duty members, spouses, single airmen, or anyone who finds themselves in a jam.

The Food Pantry will have two types of boxes that are put together by volunteers. Food boxes will consist of everything needed to make complete meals. Baby boxes will have necessities like diapers and baby food.

The boxes will be distributed out of the base chapel



Photo by Airman Nathan Doza

Daniel Macias, 5, pulls a wagon filled with supplies for the food pantry. Daniel is the son of Airman 1st Class Erica Macias, 31st Mission Support Squadron commander's support staff.



Photo by Master Sgt. Carole Steele

From left: Diane Schrader, Eliane Elliott and Cathy Knappen sort donated food items for the food pantry at the chapel Wednesday.

in Area One. "You can just walk in the chapel, say 'I need a little help,' they give you a box and you leave," said Mrs. Yates. "There are no forms, you don't have to sign anything, they won't even ask your name. It's that's easy."

With the initial food drive behind them, Mrs. Yates wanted to thank the community for all the donations. "The outpouring has been so wonderful and this is such a great way to take care of each other," she said. "Our people are very, very compassionate, always giving to other things outside of our base; it's nice to be able to take care of our own as well."

Base members don't have to wait for the next food drive to help others in their Aviano family. Food donations can always be dropped off at the chapel and the

commissary will soon have a collection box.

Monetary donations are also welcome and are used to purchase items to "fill in the gaps" when compiling the food boxes. "We want people to be able to make complete meals from the boxes. We're not going to just give them five cans of corn and a beef stew," said Mrs. Yates. "Several base organizations have already donated money to the pantry and that will really come in handy."

To make monetary donations of cash, checks or commissary gift certificates, leave a message for Mrs. Yates at the Family Support Center at Ext. 5407 or the wing staff office at Ext. 4700.

"For goodness sake, everybody runs into jams," she added. "This is just an easy way to get a little extra help, and that's it, no big deal."

Aviano Community Theater

The Aviano Community Theater and high school drama club needs volunteers to build sets for their upcoming production "Into the Woods."

They build sets on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the high school theater.

"Into the Woods" is a musical fairy tale that has well-known fairy tale characters on an adventure in the woods. Although the community theater isn't accepting auditions for the play, they welcome everyone to attend group meetings. For more information, visit www.free-webs.com/avianotheater or contact Trudy DeAngelis at Ext. 5076 or Frank Lewandowski at Ext. 5877.

African American Heritage Month

This year's African American Heritage month theme is "A Tribute to Black Fraternal, Social and Civic Organizations. The following are upcoming history month events:

Today - African American Heritage month kicks off with the start of a spades and dominoes tournament at 3 p.m. in the La Bella Vista club. For more information, call Master Sgt. Virginia Wimmer at Ext. 5519.

Saturday - Story time for children is from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the base library. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Aronda Young at Ext. 7133.

Feb. 10 - Heritage food tasting along with spades and dominoes quarter-finals is at 6 p.m. in the community center. For more information, call Staff. Sgt. Tracie Lawrence at Ext. 5459.

Feb. 11 - A three-on-three basketball tournament is at 8 a.m. in the Dragon Fitness Center, a dodgeball tournament is at 8 a.m. in the Area Two fitness center and a poetry reading is from 2 to 3 p.m. in the Base library. For more information on the sports tournaments, call Staff Sgt. William Holland. For more information on the poetry reading, call Staff Sgt. Aronda Young at Ext. 7133.

Feb. 13 - Story time for children is from 9 to 9:30 a.m. in the elementary school and a free showing of Malcolm X is at 6 p.m. in the base theater. For more information on the story time, call Staff Sgt. Aronda Young at Ext. 7133. For more information on the movie, call Master. Sgt. Virginia Wimmer at Ext. 5519.

Feb. 17 - Retired Lt. Col. Lee Archer, a Tuskegee Airman, is the guest speaker at an 8 a.m. breakfast in the La Bella Vista club, and spades and dominoes semi-finals is at 6 p.m. in the community center. For more information on the guest speaker, call Master Sgt. Wimmer at Ext. 5519. For more information on the semi-finals, call Tech. Sgt. Roy Thomas at Ext. 5242.

Feb. 24 - The spades and dominoes championship is at 6 p.m. in the La Bella Vista club. For more information, call Tech. Sgt. Roy Thomas at Ext. 5242.

Club membership: The La Bella Vista Club is hosting a Cajun-themed Mardi Gras membership night at 5 p.m. Feb. 17.

From Taxes, Page 1

tax scenarios and military specific issues. We can E-file federal tax returns and prepare state returns that the taxpayer can mail."

With E-file, most taxpayers who choose direct deposit can receive their refund in eight to 14 days. Trained UTAs provide appointments for these services within their respective organization. The legal office maintains an overflow tax center to handle taxpayers who can't schedule an appointment with their UTA.

"The main benefit of having taxes prepared through the Military Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program is the confidence received by working with an IRS trained tax preparer," Mr. Ketchum said.

Mr Ketchum added military members must schedule an appointment and ensure they have all their information with them for the appointment including bank account information and their routing and account numbers for direct deposit.

"Some of the most common errors we have seen are when people's names and socials don't match IRS/ Social Security Administration records," he said. "People need to make sure we have the same name and social combination as listed with the SSA, especially if they're recently married or divorced.

Squadron Tax representatives

• **31st Fighter Wing:** Tech. Sgt. Rosalyn Anderson Ext. 7399, Tech. Sgt. Marcia Caston Ext. 7843, Jim Ketchum Ext. 7843

• **31st Civil Engineer Squadron:** Tech. Sgt. Chad Moore Ext. 4502, Staff Sgt. Roderick Moore Ext. 5795

• **31st Contracting Squadron:** Capt. Melinda Reeder Ext. 8558

• **31st Comptroller Squadron:** Airman 1st Class Serena Cardenas Ext. 7107, Airman 1st Class Tyler Wallace Ext. 7409

• **31st Communications Squadron:** Airman 1st Class James Headrick Ext. 7142, 2nd Lt. Andrea Beltran Ext. 7329

• **31st Dental Squadron:** Master Sgt. Courtney Graham Ext. 5060, Capt. Nathan Krivitzky Ext. 5060

• **31st Logistics Readiness Squadron:** Senior Airman Danielle Garzona Ext. 8888, Tech. Sgt. Jesse Maki Ext. 7550, Staff Sgt. Kelly Mayberry Ext. 8466, Staff Sgt. Soumaly Souvanh Ext. 8466, Staff Sgt. Brandi Wheeler Ext. 7382, Staff Sgt. Scott Young Ext. 7404

• **31st Medical Operations Squadron:** Capt. Beverly Clark Ext. 5419, Capt. Patti Jo DeMotts Ext. 5338, Staff Sgt.

Amber Humelsheim Ext. 5138, Tech. Sgt. Richard Tangen Ext. 5209

• **31st Medical Support Squadron:** Capt. Patrick Misnick Ext. 5357, Master Sgt. Virginia Wimmer Ext. 5519

• **31st Maintenance Operations Squadron:** Staff Sgt. James Castillo Ext. 7305, Tech. Sgt. Eric Markel Ext. 4346, Master Sgt. Mitchell Rodgers Ext. 8620

• **31st Mission Support Squadron:** Capt. Erin Hancock Ext. 8100, Tech. Sgt. Cresencio Kerby Ext. 7496

• **31st Maintenance Squadron:** Staff Sgt. Eva Graney Ext. 7696, Staff Sgt. Eric Hill Ext. 8642, Master Sgt. Mark Kanitz Ext. 8648, Tech. Sgt. Paul Kelsey Ext. 8306, Senior Airman Jose Marquez-Rivera Ext. 7611, Staff Sgt. David McCauley Ext. 7492, Staff Sgt. Ericka Rollins Ext. 4664

• **31st Security Forces Squadron:** Airman 1st Class Raquel Figueroa Ext. 7811, Harvey Bullock Ext. 7155

• **31st Services Squadron:** Staff Sgt. Kendall Mills Ext. 4040

• **603rd Air Control Squadron:** Staff Sgt. Kristopher Clark Ext. 4034, Staff Sgt. Joe Gordon Ext. 8999, Senior Airman Randy Judy Ext. 4010

Local nationals keep Aviano

By Senior Airman Sarah Gregory
31st Fighter Wing
Public Affairs

Keeping an air base functioning takes a lot of hard work and commitment from its members. Working alongside their military counterparts, local national employees are often the behind-the-scenes support to Aviano's mission.

"We have about 600 local nationals here working across the military spectrum in everything from transportation management and mechanics to firefighters and administrative support," said Ken Watson, 31st Mission Support Group deputy commander.

Whether they're part-time or full-time employees, Aviano's civilians provide stability to Aviano and carry on its objectives when military members deploy.

"I see the overtime requests come across my desk on a weekly basis and they [local nationals] are working long hours just like everyone else," said Mr. Watson. "They work even longer hours when there are deployments. Deployments place additional burdens on these folks; work still has to be done by the people left behind."

Although local nationals don't deploy, their contributions to the war on terrorism doesn't go unnoticed by Aviano members.

"They're the lifeline of Aviano. Generally military people deploy and without the civilians' help, we wouldn't function," said Master Sgt. Rene Vandenheuvel, 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron vehicle fleet manager. "Working closely with Italians also gives us a chance to learn about a unique culture and its people."

In addition to carrying the extra work load from deployed members, Mr. Watson said civilians also provide much needed continuity to Aviano.

"We expect these folks to be masters of their trade and we rely on them for the expertise and continuity they provide in their career fields," he said. "They know why we do things a certain way at a certain time and with military folks coming and going in a fairly short period of time, they pass that knowledge along."

Using civilian employees also builds relations with the off-base community and helps the Air Force save money.

"One of the benefits the host nation has for us being here is that we provide employment to the local populace," Mr. Watson said. "And one thing the local national work force gives us is an affordable option to PCSing one of our own folks here. For instance, the vehicles in the motor pool are European cars such as Fiats and Opals. Military members typically don't have that kind of expertise [to fix foreign vehicles], nor would we want to pull that expertise all the way over here."

Even though they don't put on a uniform to come to work, the local national employees realize they are a part of the Aviano team.

"We know there are differences between the military and civilians, but we work hard together with our military friends every day and we enjoy the work we do and the time spent here," said Luciano Fabbro, a 31st Civil Engineer Squadron electrician. "If we chose to work for an Italian company, we would be losing an opportunity to learn about the American way of life and



Luciano Fabbro (left) and Giuseppe Cipolat Gotet, electricians with the 31st Civil Engineer Squadron, work on the lights alongside the 31st Fighter Wing headquarters sidewalk.

the American military."

Instead of letting the differences in culture and background divide them, local nationals and military members seem to have found by learning about each other they can overcome their differences.

"I feel very good about being part of Aviano. It's a unique experience working with the Americans because the way they work is so different from Italians," said Luciano Geronutti, 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron vehicle and equipment civilian supervisor. "They definitely focus more on safety measures. Before beginning any work we take a look around for safety concerns and this is something that the Italians are just starting to incorporate into the workplace."

Mr. Geronutti also pointed out that working around the language barrier is a compromise.

"For some of the civilians communicating is hard because they don't speak English, but we are picking up the day-to-day words used on the job and the Americans are learning some Italian."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael R. Holzworth

viano flying

Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael R. Holzworth



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael R. Holzworth

Tortelli Franco, a local national who works for the 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron, works on a metal lathe in the machine shop.

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Photo by Airman Nathan J. Doza

Above: Alfonzo Guegous, 31st Services Squadron, prepares a stew for the La Dolce Vita Dining Facility.

Left: Giorgio Bucioc, 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron, replaces an alternator in an MB4 vehicle at vehicle maintenance.

Right: Loris Carrer, 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron, removes the exhaust system in a high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle.



photo by Staff Sgt. Michael R. Holzworth

Chief recognition

A Chief Recognition Ceremony is at 6 p.m. Saturday in the La Bella Vista Club. The ceremony honors Chief Master Sgt. selects William Elliott, 704th Munitions Squadron; James Kruse, 724th Air Mobility Squadron; Luther Meitzner, 31st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron; Lloyd Muranaka, 31st AMXS; Timothy Pratt, 724th AMS; La Shawn Scott, 31st Dental Squadron; Gerald Thompson, 712th Munitions Squadron; and David Torelli, 31st Maintenance Squadron.

Valentine's dinner

The La Bella Vista Club is hosting a gourmet Valentine's dinner at 6 p.m. Feb. 11. Reservations are required. For more information, call Ext. 4303.

Prayer breakfast

A National Prayer Breakfast is scheduled for 8 a.m. Wednesday at the La Bella Vista Club. The guest speaker is Chaplain (Brig.

Gen.) Cecil Richardson, Air Force Deputy Chief of Chaplains. Tickets cost \$4 for club members and \$5 for non-club members and can be purchased through first sergeants.

USAFE Idol

Aviano singers looking for stardom can prepare for USAFE Idol at 7 p.m. Feb. 25 in the community center. The first place winner receives \$350 and will advance to the USAFE-level competition April 17-22 at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Second and third place winners will receive cash prizes. The contest is open to all Aviano members. Interested people must sign-up at the community center by Feb. 11. For more information, call Ext. 5479 or visit www.usafesvsmarketing.org/idol.htm.

Awards banquet

The 31st Fighter Wing's annual awards banquet is at 6 p.m. March 3 in the La Bella Vista Club. This year's theme is "Honoring

Aviano's Finest" and people interested in attending can contact their unit first sergeants beginning Thursday. The uniform for military is mess dress or semi-formal and civilian dress is formal or semi-formal. The cost is \$16.50 for club members and \$18.50 for non-club members. For more information, call Senior Master Sgt. Michael Land at Ext. 8295.

Munitions

The Munitions Storage Area (Area G) will be closed for business from Feb. 17 through March 19 due to an exercise and an inventory. During this time only valid emergencies will be supported. For more information, call Ext. 8774.

Volunteers

The community center needs volunteers from 7 a.m. to noon and from noon to 5 p.m. Feb. 14 to help deliver Valentine's Day balloon bouquets.

The community center also needs volunteers at 5 p.m. and at 9:30 p.m. Saturday to help set up and break down the stage for the Adam's Attic performance.

To volunteer for these events, call Richard Totten at Ext. 5470 or e-mail richard.totten@aviano.af.mil.

Toddler playgroup

The Lil Bambino Playgroup for children up to age five meets from 10 a.m. to noon Wednesdays in the youth center gymnasium. The playgroup offers free play, story time, music with dancing and a snack time. For more information, call Jacky Hingleton at 0434-41-505, or 348-121-3921, or e-mail lil-bambino@hotmail.com.

Combat Education

Airmen interested in a commission can attend a commissioning workshop 9 a.m. Feb. 17 in the education center.

The education center also holds weekly Community College of the Air Force de-

gree sessions for those interested in the program. To check current CCAF progress, visit the Air Force Portal at www.my.af.mil. For more information, call the education center at Ext. 5330.

Thrift shop

The Aviano Thrift Shop takes consignments from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays and from 10 a.m. to noon the first Saturday of the month. Donations are taken during business hours, which are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Online audio books

The U.S. Air Forces in Europe libraries have online audio books for all ages. The books can be accessed from any computer with Internet access and the collection includes fiction, non-fiction, current titles and classics for adults, teens and children. The audio books may not work from a military computer. To access books, visit www.USAFELibraries.org.

Area One traffic

Traffic in Area One is detoured through Monday due to utility construction. Traffic to the 31st Medical Group will not be affected.

All other traffic will be one way and must follow the traffic pattern towards the high school and library, passing behind the bowling alley and mini-mall. Motorists are encouraged to reduce speed and observe posted signs. For more information, call Giancarlo Biasutto at Ext. 5759.

Building renovation

The 31st Security Forces Squadron's Pass and Registration building will be renovated starting Monday. The renovation will last about six weeks and customers might experience service delays. During this time, Soggiorno operations will be conducted on Thursdays in Bldg. 1133. For more information, call Ext. 4858.

Reel Times

Today, 5 p.m. - "King Kong" Rated PG-13 - While filming at Skull Island, a group of filmmakers discover a giant gorilla and ship it to New York. Starring: Naomi Watts, Adrien Brody

Today, 8 p.m. - "King Kong" Rated PG-13

Saturday, 2 p.m. - "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" Rated PG-13 - Harry faces his greatest challenges and dangers when he is selected as a contestant in the Triwizard Tournament. Starring: Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson

Saturday, 7 p.m. - "King Kong" Rated PG-13

Sunday, 2 p.m. - "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" Rated PG-13

Sunday, 7 p.m. - "Walk the Line" Rated PG-13 - A chronicle of country music legend Johnny Cash's life from his early days on an Arkansas cotton farm to his rise to fame. Starring: Joaquin Phoenix, Reese Witherspoon

Wednesday, 7 p.m. - "King Kong" Rated PG-13

Thursday, 7 p.m. - "Derailed" Rated R - An advertising executive is just another Chicago commuter who catches the train to work, but one day he meets Lucinda and his life is changed forever. Starring: Clive Owen, Jennifer Aniston

(Titles and times are courtesy of www.aafes.com, and are subject to change.)

Fly Bys

Local area events

Through March 19 - Artistic photos and knives are on display at 8 p.m. Fridays, 10 a.m. to noon Saturdays and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sundays in the Coricama Center, downtown Maniago.

Through April 30 - A Chinese Art exhibit is from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily in Treviso. For more information, visit www.laviadellasetta.info.

Carnevale

Almost every Italian city has at least one day or weekend dedicated to Carnevale celebration. Carnevale in **Venice** is famous for its lavish festivals and this year runs Feb. 17 - 24. More is offered on the weekends than weekdays, but weekends are also more crowded. Entertainment includes costume parades, fireworks, torchlight boat regattas, live music, fire eaters and jugglers. Since the Venice area is crowded during Carnevale, be careful of pickpockets.

Other Carnevale locations include **Viareggio**, located north of Pisa, which is famous for its 1920 art nouveau style architecture.

Verona celebrates **Venerdì Gnocolar** Feb. 11 with a masked procession and floats. Free *gnocchi* dumplings are served.

Online travel

Visit www.afttravelonline.com for information on airplane and train tickets and hotel reservations.

Explore the castle ruins, ski runs of Villach

By 1st Lt. Nicole Dubnicay
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Two hours from Aviano lays the small town of Villach, just over the Austrian border. The town offers a short distance travel opportunity with many attractions packed into a small area.

Villach's real offer is the variety of attractions and the serenity of nature. Most everything is scenic and peaceful; the area seems to blend with its surroundings and offers an enjoyable relaxing, or sport-filled visit. The area is filled with bicycling, hiking, cross country skiing and horse riding trails.

Centered in the Carinthian Lake District, Villach sits along the Drau River. The river runs along the old town, which offers a great little shopping area. The downtown area is small, but offers a good variety of stores and a few bars and clubs clustered just off the main street including an American-style sports bar.

One of the biggest attractions of Villach is the surrounding area. If you're visiting in the summer you can travel southeast to Faaker See (Lake Faaker). There are many hiking trails and the area is well-known because of its position in the Villacher Alps. The trails offer many panoramic views of the surrounding area.

Alongside the lakebed are the ruins of Finkenstein Castle. Dating back to the 12th century, the castle is nestled above Lake Faaker. It has been unoccupied since the late 17th century. From July to September the ruins play host to a wide range of events from beer festivals to concerts.

Another attraction, on the northeast side of Villach near the Drau River, is the Landskron Castle. Built in the 16th century on the foundation walls of a fortification dating from the 14th century, today Landskron houses a modern restaurant, a monkey park and an ornithological station for birds of prey.

There are a few ski areas within close driving distance from the center of Villach. Gerlitzen Mountain is two kilometers from the motorway



Courtesy photo

At only two hours away, Villach, Austria, offers travelers a day's worth of outdoor activities close to home.

junction of Knoten Villach and Ossiacher See.

Gerlitzen offers approximately 20 kilometers of ski run, with one cable car to the top, three four- and two-person chair lifts, four T-bar lifts and three rope tows for beginners. The park is constructing a new eight-person chair lift, expected to open this year. There are six easy ski runs, nine intermediate and two advanced.

Prices for skiing are relatively inexpensive. An adult day pass costs €31. The cost includes the cable lift to the top of the mountain where you can catch chair lifts to the various ski runs. A teenage day pass costs €25 and a children's pass is €14.50.

Those chilly from skiing can venture four kilometers south to Warmbad-Villach, a town known for its thermal pools and mineral springs. There are several hotels that offer hotel/spa packages, but you're not required to have a room at the hotel to enjoy the spa. It's said the ancient Romans used the warm springs at Warmbad on a road that led into Italy.

Virtually everything in Warmbad stems from tourism; transportation is easy to figure out with red buses running between of Warmbad and Villach every 30 minutes all day. Trains are also available between the towns.

After completing a day of exploring nature trails, spend the evening soaking in thermal pools and mineral springs and then dine on traditional Austrian cuisine. Make sure you work up an appetite – the serving size in Austria is much bigger than what you'd imagine.

Going places? Traveling somewhere interesting? Tell us about it! Submit travel stories or photos to Vigileer@aviano.af.mil.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Jason Gregory

The Hohensalzburg Fortress towers over **Salzburg**, Austria, where the "The Sound of Music" was filmed.

Information, Tickets and Travel

Upcoming tours from the Information, Tickets and Travel office include:

- Saturday - Guided Salzburg and Sound of Music
- Saturday - Bolzano and Ice Man Museum
- Feb. 11 - Guided Florence
- Feb. 11 - St. Valentine's wine tasting in the Veneto region

ITT escorts ensure the group arrives and departs from the destination

as scheduled and will do everything possible to make the trip safe and comfortable. Escorts also provide general information about the area. Please note weather conditions and dress accordingly for the trip. ITT staff also recommends wearing comfortable shoes because almost all tours involve walking.

Call Ext. 5072 or 5026 for more information.

Guardsman soars into Super Bowl

By Army Sgt. Jim Greenhill
National Guard Bureau

Bryce Fisher, the "Guardsman," can earn a medal or a ribbon or receive a commander's coin for a job well done.

Now, Bryce Fisher, the "football player," has a shot at a Super Bowl ring and a title his hometown has been waiting 30 years for.

The Seahawks, the newly-crowned National Football Conference champions, will play the American Football Conference champion Pittsburgh Steelers in Super Bowl XL Sunday in Detroit.

Fisher, 28, is the Seahawks' starting left defensive end, No. 94. Since being sworn in last November, he is also Capt. Bryce Fisher, a Washington Air National Guard public affairs officer.

After the Seahawks' 34-14 victory over Carolina in the NFC championship game Jan. 22, Fisher ran onto Qwest Field, a place that owner Paul Allen designed to be deliberately deafening.

With the crowd noise rivaling the roar of two F-16s at full throttle, Fisher hugged his teammates. But most of all he smiled.

"The Air Force gave me my opportunity to succeed and play football in college, and if it hadn't been for the things I learned — the discipline, the teamwork — I don't think I ever would have got to be a part of a thing

like this," he said.

His roles as a Guardsman and pro football player work two ways. He brings the discipline of the military to the team. As he soars with the Seahawks, he highlights the role of the Air National Guard to the nation.

"It puts my name out there," Fisher said in the locker room after the game. "And it gives me a chance to shed some light that there are a lot of people who are Soldiers in a lot of different environments — doctors, lawyers — and they're doing great things their one weekend a month and two weeks a year."

As the 6-foot-3, 268-pound Fisher changed into a sweatshirt and jeans, Tim Ruskell, the Seahawks' president of football operations, said the qualities that the defensive end honed in the Guard are an asset to the team.

"We're just so proud of what he's accomplished," Mr. Ruskell said. "The character that he brings to our locker room and the work ethic, permeates throughout the locker room — certainly along the defensive line — and it adds to what this team has done."

Head Coach Mike Holmgren echoed that observation the day after the Seahawks clinched the NFC title.

"First of all, Bryce has had a great season," Coach Holmgren said. "He brings a try-hard attitude, he goes 150 miles per hour all the time. And I'm sure there's a lot of carryover from his military background."

Fly Bys

Volksmarch

The Aviano Road Runners are participating in a Volksmarch at 8 a.m. Sunday. The group leaves the Bar Municipio in Rovereto and heads to Vallenoncello. For more information, call Ext. 7692.

Pool tournament

The 2006 U.S. Air Forces in Europe Pool Sharks Tournament begins at 7 p.m. today in the Community Center and runs through Feb. 11. Single or two-person teams must sign-up before the tournament and be 18 years old. Winners will advance to RAF Lakenheath, England, for the finals.

Intramural V-ball

The Dragon Fitness Center is preparing for the Intramural Volleyball season. Team sign-up deadline is Feb. 28. For more information, contact your squadron Fitness and Sports Representative or the Dragon Fitness Center at Ext. 7459.

Project Cheer

The Project Cheer Racquetball Tournament is at 9 a.m. Feb. 25 Dragon Fitness Center. Participants will be broken down into advanced and intermediate classes. Sign up at the Dragon Fitness Center by Feb. 21. For more information, call Robby England at Ext. 7574.

Area Two hours

The Area Two fitness center hours are from 5:30 to 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 to 7:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and is closed on weekends. For more information, call Ext. 5269.

Volleyball

The Dragon Fitness Center is accepting applications for male and female volleyball players to participate in the 2006 Volleyball Championships at Ramstein March 21-24. For more information, call Ext. 7574.

Get Fit: Youth age 9 to 18 can sign up for Fit Factor at: <http://www.afgetfit.com/home.aspx>.

Basketball standings

Team	Won	Lost
31 MXS	16	1
31 SFS	15	2
31 CS	13	2
AMDS (MDG B)	11	5
31 MXS [AMMO]	10	5
MOS	9	5
31 LRS	7	7
724 AMS	7	9
CPTS/SVS	6	11
BRAVO CO	6	11
31 CES	7	15
31 MDG (A TEAM)	5	12
603RD B TEAM	4	12
603RD	1	20

Over 30 Basketball standings

Team	Won	Lost
31 MXS	6	2
31 LRS	5	2
31 CS	5	3
31 MSS	5	3
31 SFS	4	4
31 MDG	4	4
31 CES	1	7
Female Varsity team	1	7



Photo by Capt. Paul Thorton

Ice escapade

Aviano Ice Dragons member, Mark Bucher, right, makes a move against the Slovenian team at Lake Bled last Jan. 28. The Ice Dragons look to compete in the U.S. Air Forces in Europe tournament in Garmisch, Germany, next week.

Patience, time management saves lives

By Master Sgt. Terry Todd
31st Fighter Wing
ground safety manager

It was a typical evening. I was on my way home with my son when we came across an intersection we had crossed several times before. There was another vehicle across from me waiting to turn left onto the priority road. I had the right of way and I was waiting for a car to clear the intersection before I proceeded.

It was at that moment I was happy to be a patient individual because the guy waiting to turn was not. The individual proceeded into the intersection and was immediately struck on the passenger side door by another vehicle that had priority on the road. The impact was so loud and powerful that my son later told me he felt the pressure from the two vehicles colliding. The vehicle turning was struck so hard he was pushed across the intersection and stopped about five feet from my vehicle.

Immediately, I put my vehicle in park and went to provide assistance, which is required by Italian law. Fortunately, both drivers were okay, just shaken up. Both vehicles sustained enough damage that they had to be towed. After being released from my duties at the scene I continued on my way, all the while thinking how that could have been me and my son. By not being in a rush, I saved myself and my son from certain injury.

This unfortunate event reminded me how important it is to be patient. I honestly believe had the individual not been in a rush to get through the intersection before me, the accident may not have occurred.

Since my arrival to Aviano, I have noticed drivers are very impatient. They have the tendency to tailgate, create lanes that don't exist or turn in front of you at an intersection if you don't move fast enough for them.

Why, I don't know.

I have been in the military for almost 20 years – half as a law enforcement specialist and the other half as a safety professional. I have seen both sides of what happens during a mishap, from the initial response at the scene as a first responder all the way to the investigation phase. With that knowledge, I have concluded we don't manage our time well enough.

A good example is an individual who lives 30 miles from the base and knows on an ideal day it would take an average of 25-30 minutes to get safely to the base following the rules of the road and posted speed limits. Typically, that's not how that individual would do it. Some people would rather wait until the last possible moment and rush out of their homes, get into their cars and break the law by speeding and creating those "ghost lanes," to get to where they are going. They never once take into consideration that they are putting themselves and others at risk for injury and/or death.

Why? What is going on in their lives that makes it okay for them to put the lives of others at risk, when they are armed with the knowledge of what it takes to get where they want to be safely? I have heard ego, pride in knowing what their vehicle can do, I have even heard 'just because I can' ... all bad answers.

This is where proper time management and patience comes into play. Being in a rush or trying to prove how powerful your vehicle is to satisfy your ego will only set you up for failure.

Good planning, time management and patience are the keys to success. When you take the time to plan, properly manage your day and properly operate your vehicle, you will not have to suffer the same fate as the Italian gentleman did.

Recognizing The World's Finest

• I recently had to require the medical services of the 31st Medical Group while visiting my son in Italy. My wife had suffered a broken hip about six weeks prior to our visit and was on pain medication. I had miscalculated the amount of medication to take with us and she was going to run out before our return to the U.S. I went to the medical center at Aviano and never before have we been treated more cordially and professionally than we were there. Our total visit lasted about 20 minutes and we left with sufficient medication. I would like to thank the following 31st Medical Operations Support Squadron people: **Senior Airman Rebecca Steuver**, administrative technician, **Airman 1st Class Jennifer Montiel**, medical technician, **Tech. Sgt. Reymundo Rocha**, medical technician, **Capt. PattiJo DeMotts**, team nurse, and **Dr. (Maj.) Michael Hafran**. Everyone treated us as visiting royalty. - *Retired Senior Master Sgt. David Summerfield*

• Congratulations to the following quarterly award winners: **1st Lt. Jeffery Fogle**, 31st Maintenance Group, was named Company Grade Officer of the Quarter; **Master Sgt. Steven Bagley**, 31st Communications Squadron, was named Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Quarter; **Staff Sgt. Johnathon Myers**, 31st CS, was named NCO of the Quarter; **Airman 1st Class Jienelle Arevalo**, 31st Fighter Wing, was named Airman of the Quarter; **Tammy Woodward**, 31st Fighter Wing, was named Technician of the Quarter; **Luciano Barbot** was named Wage Grade Employee of the Quarter; **Marinella Fontanelli**, 31st Comptroller Squadron, was named Manager of the Quarter; **David LaBonte**, 31st Services Squadron, was named Specialist of the Quarter; **Jessica Zika** was named Non-Technical Volunteer of the Quarter; and **Deborah Workinger** was named Technical Volunteer of the Quarter.



The Cornerstone

An indispensable and fundamental basis

The Cornerstone Page is devoted to those who support junior enlisted, NCOs, CGOs and spouses. It's to share advice, ideas and opinions dealing with life in the Air Force and Aviano. It's also a forum to recognize those around us. The Cornerstone Page will also offer Air Force trivia and facts.

Submission info: We want to hear from you. Flex your writing talents and share your thoughts with us and the community.

Commentaries: Writers can send commentaries to vigileer@aviano.af.mil. Commentaries must be 500 to 700 words. Topics must be applicable to the Air Force, Aviano and appeal to the general public. For questions or concerns, call the Vigileer at Ext. 7344.

Kudos: Aviano members can send congratulatory messages to Vigileer@aviano.af.mil. Messages can be submitted for appreciation, retirements, awards, good service, promotions and graduations. For questions or concerns, call the Vigileer at Ext. 7344.

Deadline: The deadline for submitting information is close of business Thursday one week prior to publication. Faxed articles will not be accepted by the staff. The public affairs office is in Bldg. 1360, Room 19.